DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 443 140 EA 030 444

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TITLE The Struggle for Ideological Control over Curriculum: Two New Zealand Examples.
PUB DATE 2000-04-00
NOTE 34p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 24-28, 2000).
PUB TYPE Opinion Papers (120) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Curriculum Development; *Curriculum Evaluation; Curriculum Problems; *Educational Administration; *Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Public Schools
IDENTIFIERS *New Zealand

ABSTRACT

In the 1980s, the government of New Zealand came under the influence of a new right-wing economic ideology whose political agenda evolved to include the review and reform of education. The reforms were to take two paths: administrative and curricular. This paper focuses on the curricular reforms and the development of two key national curriculum statements: (1) the curriculum policy statement for K-12, the 1993 "New Zealand Curriculum Framework, Te Anga Marautanga o Aotearoa"; and (2) the early childhood curriculum "Te Whariki" (1996). The curriculum for years 1-13 (K-12) became centrally controlled, subject-based, and achievement oriented, while the early childhood document outlined a child-centered, thematic, and experiential curriculum. This paper explores how such divergence arose out of the same sociopolitical context. The development process and the content of the documents are analyzed using theoretical models and concepts from both traditional and contemporary curriculum theory. This paper elaborates on certain assumptions concerning curriculum in New Zealand and then outlines the curriculum history relevant to the study. The conclusion reached is that the two curricula were so different because there were differing ideological factions at work vying for control over their construction. (Contains 57 references.) (DFR)

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Paper presented to the AERA Annual Meeting.
Creating Knowledge in the 21st century: Insights from multiple perspectives.
New Orleans. April 24- 28, 2000.

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The Struggle for Ideological Control over Curriculum: two New Zealand examples.

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In the 1980s the government of New Zealand came under the influence of new right economic ideology. The political agenda came to include the review and reform of education. The reforms were to take two paths: administrative and curricular. This paper focuses on the curricular reforms and the development of two key national curriculum statements. The curriculum for Years 1-13 (K-12) became centrally controlled, subject-based and achievement oriented. In contrast the early childhood document outlined a child-centred, thematic and experiential curriculum. This paper explores how such divergence arose out of the same socio-political context. The development process and the content of the documents are analysed using theoretical models and concepts from both traditional and contemporary curriculum theory.

> How a society selects, classifies, distributes, transmits and evaluates the educational knowledge it considers to be public reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control. (Bernstein, 1971:85)

The study of curriculum as a phenomenon is a relatively new one. Although the purpose of education has long been debated it was really only the twentieth century that saw attempts to describe, analyse and interpret curriculum and only in the last few decades attempts to understand its varying contexts and complexities.

What follows is a study of curriculum construction underpinned by the following assumptions:

- curriculum in New Zealand is becoming a field of study in its own right;
- an historical perspective is imperative for understanding the current field of curriculum;
- curriculum construction happens in a social, political, cultural and economic context;
- there is no definitive curriculum theory rather there are many, varied and often conflicting theories used to explain and interpret curriculum; and
- curriculum is viewed as a construction which can be read as a text and analysed as a discourse.

This paper elaborates on these assumptions. It introduces the field of curriculum study in New Zealand then outlines the curriculum history relevant to the study.

This is followed by an examination of the social, political and economic context of curriculum construction in New Zealand during this period. The paper continues the discussion of curriculum as a socio-political construction by looking specifically at two curriculum documents, the curriculum policy statement for years 1-13 (K-12), the 1993 *New Zealand Curriculum Framework Te Anga Marautanga o Aotearoa (NZCF),* and the early childhood curriculum *Te Whariki* (1996) [1]. Borrowing from both traditional and contemporary analyses historical development is then linked with textual analysis.

Curriculum as a field

> Curriculum as a field of study has been characterised as elusive, fragmentary, and confusing. Ornstein and Hunkins (1998:1)

Although curriculum as field of study has developed a strong tradition in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, albeit arising from differing historical and philosophical traditions, it is relatively new in New Zealand. Traditionally universities taught education studies from a theoretical perspective contributing to arts degrees, and colleges of education dealt with teacher education focusing on curriculum from a more practical perspective. The education reforms of the 1980s and 1990s allowed universities (and private providers) to become involved in teacher education, and colleges of education to offer degrees. This has meant that both types of institutions have redesigned courses to integrate the theoretical and practical aspects of curriculum. The emerging field is a blend of what Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Tubman (1996) would term traditional and reconceptualist paradigms. This is reflected in the content of Clive McGee's recent textbook *Teachers and Curriculum Decision-Making* (1997) which uses a cyclical curriculum development model as a framework for integrating traditional theories with current research and issues. If a New Zealand curriculum field is becoming apparent then it arises from this eclectic borrowing of other countries' traditions and writings which is then fused with our unique perspective. This perspective takes account of our own indigenous, colonial and more recent histories, our emerging identity as a bi-cultural country with a growing multi-cultural element, a strong tradition of political critique, a growing body of work on gender and post-colonialism and a

developing awareness of the perspectives that postmodernism and poststructuralism offer.

Pinar *et al* (op cit:3) decry writers who " present a field of study as if it were an army of disembodied ideas, marching across a blank space of time, inevitably annexing unincorporated space, establishing cities of systematised thought." They continue, "the truth is fields do not proceed that way" (ibid) and the field in New Zealand has not proceeded in that way either. The complexity of the developing curriculum field, the changes it has undergone and the wealth of traditions and perspectives it draws upon are important aspects underpinning this study.

Curriculum history

Pinar *et al* continue, "A field of study does not just happen. A field evolves over time and involves the labor of many participants. To begin to understand curriculum comprehensively it is essential to portray its development historically." (p70). They cite many examples of curriculum writers who express this sentiment, for example, Goodson (1989), "It is time to place historical study at the centre of curriculum enterprise" and Tanner and Tanner, (1990), "History should provide us with a sense of identity and a collective conscience" (Ibid:70).

Diorio (1992) explains that historical studies of education deal with two main classes of phenomena, firstly documentary evidence (policies, commission reports, education reviews...) and secondly actual educational practices. He cautions that a study of the first cannot be assumed to provide direct insight into the second and nor can the reverse be assumed, that is, that accounts of what happened in schools be directly attributable to the prescriptions of the times.

The author accepts Diorio's cautions but this study quite deliberately takes as its focus the first category- the formal, written statements of intention. While recognising the contextual interpretation and implementation of these documents is a legitimate part of the curriculum field it is beyond the scope of this study.

Mutch (1996, 1997, 1998) has described New Zealand's curriculum history as dividing into three eras which are characterised by the key ideological tensions or

debates of the time. The first era highlights the tension between the indigenous culture and the colonisers in the nineteenth century. The second outlines the tension between the traditional conservatives and liberal progressives for most of the twentieth century. The final era is that of tension between the new right and liberal left from the 1980s to the present.

New Zealand was first settled circa 800-1000 AD by the indigenous people known as the Maori, who call themselves tangata whenua (the people of the land). The Maori settled in various parts of the country adapting to the environment and establishing a culture that developed a strong oral tradition, sophisticated systems of social organisation, architecture, hunting and warfare, and distinctive arts and crafts. (Naumann, Harrison and Winiata, 1990). The Maori lived virtually undisturbed by outsiders until the end of the eighteenth century when sealers, whalers and adventurers began to make New Zealand their home. In 1814 the first Christian missionaries arrived and in 1840 a treaty was signed between the English Crown and representatives of the Maori.

In terms of curriculum the Maori met the educational needs of their people through their oral culture, using models of experiential learning and apprenticeship. (Metge and Kinloch, 1988). With the arrival of the European (or Pakeha as they have become known) bringing customs and traditions from their homelands (Davies, 1994) there was bound to be conflict. The conflict resulted in the Land Wars of the 1860s and by the end of the nineteenth century the colonist population outstripped the indigenous population and the Maori were economically, politically and educationally marginalised. (Simon, 1994).

The second era in curriculum history stretches from the beginning of the twentieth century to the economic decline of the 1970s. The established education system was based on the British model with a competitive academic curriculum. (Davies, op cit). This was to be challenged by a more progressive and egalitarian curriculum springing from ideas of Rousseau, Froebel, Montessori, Dewey and others, and spread in the 1930s and 1940s by the New Education Foundation an organisation founded in Britain which developed a strong following in New Zealand (Abiss, 1998). For a time a liberal progressive approach to education was in ascendancy as the Labour Prime Minister and Director General of Education joined forces to establish an education system and

curriculum which supported such ideas (Alcorn, 1999). The Fraser/Beeby statement from the time was held up as the cornerstone of educational thinking:

> The Government's objective, broadly expressed, is that every person whatever his level of academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country, has a right as a citizen, to a free education for which he is best fitted and to the fullest extent of his powers. So far is this from being a mere pious platitude that the full acceptance of the principle will involve a reorientation of the education system. (quoted in Alcorn, ibid:99).

As economic prosperity declined in the 1970s, education's 'playway' methods came under attack and solutions were proposed by those in sectors outside education. This heralds the third era of curriculum contestation. At this time health, education and welfare programmes absorbed more than half of all government expenditure. (Statistics New Zealand, 1995). Before both the 1984 and 1987 elections the Treasury issued briefing papers to the incoming governments advising them of how this expenditure could be decreased and the economy strengthened. (Ibid). This advice was accepted and the ideology known as 'new right' began to pervade education policy leading to major educational reforms in both administration and curriculum.

The 1980s saw a plethora of educational reviews and government policies. Those focusing on the Year 1-13 (K-12) curriculum were *The Curriculum Review* (1987), leading to the draft *National Curriculum Statement* (1988), the draft *National Curriculum of New Zealand* (1991) and finally the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework Te Anga Marautanga o Aotearoa* (1993). Those focusing on the early childhood curriculum were *Education to be More* (the Meade Report) (1988) leading to *Before Five* (1989) and eventually *Te Whariki* (1996).

Curriculum contexts- social, political and economic

Pinar *et al* (op cit) contend that the contemporary curriculum field focuses on 'why' rather than 'how' as was previously the case. A field, they argue, "is rooted in the world, of course, in that world it chooses to examine. It is influenced also by the entire world: history, politics, life, and death." (p7).This study acknowledges that curriculum construction does not happen in a vacuum but is

influenced by the context in which it occurs. This context could be historical, political, social, cultural, religious and/or economic.

One of the major trends in education to appear in the literature in New Zealand over recent years is the impact of new right economics. Not only has this affected the administration and funding of education but it has also impacted on curriculum construction. The tensions between the major curriculum construction influences – the new right and the countering forces - the liberal left, and the tensions within each faction, can clearly be seen in the ideologies underpinning newly developed curriculum documents and the discourses used to present them.

In order to examine this trend more closely it is necessary to return to the 1970s.

> The 1970s, a decade of inflation and zero growth led to the reassessment of education for it did not appear to be delivering the goods. The mounting attack followed similar themes internationally, especially a concern for standards and a call from conservative opinion to go 'back to basics'; a realisation that the floodgates of opportunity had not been opened...; and a belief that school was failing to prepare pupils for the world of work, for industry and commerce, in other words failing to prepare them for adult life. (Dufour, 1982:223).

The 1970s and 1980s in New Zealand was a time of see-sawing changes in public opinion and growing divisions in society. The two main parties competing for electoral votes were the National Party, traditionally representing conservative and business interests, and the Labour Party, traditionally representing the working classes and more liberal interests.

National had been in government since 1960 but was defeated in 1972 by Labour whose foreign policies struck a chord with the growing popular culture. The sudden death of the popular Prime Minister Norman Kirk, the rise in oil prices and the growing trade deficit led to a swing back to National in 1975. Dawn raids on Pacific Island overstayers and anti-Springbok rugby tour demonstrations divided the country. Terms of trade plummeted and inflation soared. The standard of living dropped and unemployment rose. Various

strategies to make the country more self-sufficient worsened the state of the economy - all leading to a return to Labour in 1984. (Statistics New Zealand, op cit).

After winning the 1984 election Labour had to decide how to deal with the economic crisis and to do this they "demolished the structures [which became known as the Welfare State] established by the first Labour Government" in 1935 (ibid). The government was again facing a crisis of legitimation.

Legitimation (Habermas, 1976) is what persuades the mass of the population that the status quo is the commonsense way to organise society - it converts power into authority. In times of economic decline the public become discontented and disillusioned with the status quo. They start to question what is happening and to demand answers or seek alternatives - the government then faces a legitimation crisis. The government must consider how to remain credible.

In the 1970s and 1980s the state faced a legitimation crisis brought on by world-wide recession.

> The Muldoon [National] government had come to be perceived by many as epitomising some of the worst features of the capitalist welfare state in which highly centralised forms of public administration had become blatantly and intolerably undemocratic. (Codd, 1990:192)

Business and other conservative groups had already been working behind the scenes to get their players into key positions where their interests could be served. They believed decreased taxation would allow business to grow so it became important to have key people in a position of influence to foster this notion. Finance Minister Roger Douglas accepted Treasury advice, rejecting the Keynesian approach of the previous decades and set about restructuring the economy.

> "Rogernomics" embraced the monetarist philosophy which held that tight control of the money supply, and therefore of the rate of inflation, would lead to the efficient allocation of resources by the 'invisible hand' of the market. (Statistics New Zealand, op cit:41)

Attention then turned to health, education and welfare. State assets were sold and user-pays systems were introduced as these new right policies were implemented.

Who was the new right and what did they stand for? Lauder (1990) says that they "are held together by a family of mutually consistent concepts which provide their view of the social world". He elaborates on these views under the following headings:

1. View of human nature: Human beings are fundamentally possessive and concerned with the pursuit of self interest.
2. View of society: There should be minimal state support, under unrestrained free-market conditions the 'fittest will survive'.
3. View of the state: The state tends to stifle the impulse to make profits and for entrepreneurial activity. Privatisation leads to competition which is more efficient.
4. View of inequality: Individual freedom is more important than equality of opportunity.
5. Freedom and the market: The market is the one mechanism which maximises freedom of individuals' thought by peacefully adjusting conflicting interests.

According to Dale (1989) the new right contains two forces - the neo-liberals and the neo-conservatives. The neo-liberals want freedom for the market to dictate direction and have no particular views on right and wrong as market forces will lead the way. The neo-conservatives want to prescribe and regulate, preferring carefully monitored accountability and old-fashioned values. The tensions between the two views and the way they have both attempted to shape curriculum policy, yet give concessions to each other in order to keep a strong alliance, has led to some of the contradictory directions curriculum policy has taken.

The neo-liberal and neo-conservative forces at this time pulled education policy in conflicting directions - on the one hand a call for less centralised bureaucracy and more decision-making at the school and parental level on administrative matters, but on the other hand more tightly structured national control of the curriculum and assessment.

Administering for Excellence [The Picot Report] (1988) outlined the justification for these reforms:

> The present structure is overcentralised and made complex by having too many decision points. Effective management practices are lacking... To make progress, radical change is now required... Because the state provides the funds and retains a strong interest in educational outcomes, there must be national objectives and clear responsibilities and goals. (Taskforce to Review Education Administration, 1988:xi)

The Prime Minister, David Lange, took over the Education portfolio and chose to focus on administrative reforms. He set up a taskforce to review educational administration. Named the Picot Report after its chairperson it was to have a major impact on all that followed. Lange subsequently released his policy document: *Tomorrow's Schools*. In critiquing the Picot Report and *Tomorrow's Schools*, Codd (op cit:152) states:

> It is significant that the Picot Report makes almost no reference to the curriculum... It is as if curriculum and administration can exist in isolation from each other... The Picot Report fails to acknowledge that educational administration should be primarily concerned with the production and control of the curriculum and with creating a learning environment conducive to the general aims of education.

Peters, Marshall & Massey (1993:260) explain that the government was, in fact, relinquishing 'no-win' areas and consolidating control over vital areas "where losing would have threatened its ability to manage the system at all."

The two forces of Dale's (op cit) can be seen pulling educational policy in divergent directions. *Tomorrow's Schools* devolved to schools and their Boards of Trustees the power to make decisions on resources, staffing and administration but control of the curriculum still belonged to central bodies such as the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office.

In terms of curriculum policy at the end of this legitimation crisis, how had the government maintained its credibility and power?

The government had made good use of its statutory powers by passing acts that allowed the implementation of its policies. The Education Act (1989) and following amendments abolished the Department of Education and its divisions such as Curriculum Development and set up a stream-lined Ministry of Education to oversee the implementation of educational policy. Bodies such as the Educational Review Office and New Zealand Qualifications Authority (which were independent of the Ministry) were established to ensure that standards of teaching and learning were maintained. The power of the teaching unions was diminished as collective bargaining was discouraged through the Employment Contracts Act. Policy Advisory Groups were set up to provide advice for the government on curricular matters. The policy advisory groups contained ministry officials and educators but also had strong representation from business interests and new right political lobby groups.

If the 1970s and 1980s saw divisions growing in New Zealand society it seemed even more so as the 1990s approached. Opinion on educational matters seemed polarised. There were those who favoured the accountability drive from the new right and there were those who opposed it refusing to see education as a commodity which could be discussed in production-line metaphors.

In 1990 there was a change of government. The fourth Labour government, which ironically had proved to be champions of the new right monetarist policies, was replaced by a more moderate sounding National government. Appointments to the Finance, Social Welfare and Education portfolios, however, soon left the country in no doubt that reforms would continue to move in the same direction.

In a democratic society one of the means of establishing hegemony is through electoral processes. Elected governments claim mandates to enshrine certain value positions in curriculum and schooling policy. (Grundy, Warhurst, Laird & Maxwell 1994:111)

Gramsci (1978) proposed the idea of ideological hegemony to explain how ruling classes maintain their dominance by organising popular consensus. Their view of the world is diffused through agencies of ideological control and socialisation into everyday language and thinking. As the 1990s began privatisation, competition and accountability were widely used and accepted notions. The new right had

achieved this through a carefully orchestrated campaign to have the general public accept these values as commonsense and irrefutable and wanted to use the schools, via the curriculum, to act as agents of socialisation to continue this process. As Shuker (1987:22) states "An important aspect of hegemony is that it mystifies and conceals existing power relations and social arrangements."

As the nineties progressed there was still a polarisation with the government, Treasury, business interests such as the Business Roundtable and conservative educational groups such as the Independent Schools Council, the Principals Federation and the School Trustees Association tending to the right and most teachers and their unions and liberal educationalists toward the left. It was in this context of polarised socio-political ideologies that the two documents under scrutiny were developed.

The development of the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework*

> [T]he problem of curriculum planning is ... making the selection of the most important aspects of culture for transmission to the next generation. The crucial cultural question is 'what is worthwhile?' and the crucial political question is 'who makes the selection?' (Lawton, 1980:6)

The new curriculum guidelines for Years 1-13 went through several versions before the 1993 document was released. The first version in 1988 showed the strong influence of earlier liberal-progressive views. The second version in 1991 was more strongly aligned to new right ideology with its emphasis on education for economic growth and international competitiveness. The 1993 version reached a compromise acknowledging the changes in society and the economy but also making strong statements about equal opportunities and success for all. A little more detail about the development follows.

The Curriculum Review (Committee to Review the Curriculum for Schools, 1987) recommended that there should be a new national curriculum for all schools and that the Department of Education should take a major role in getting this underway. Although a national curriculum had long been a feature of New Zealand education new developments proceeded in a rather ad-hoc way and criticisms emanated from both ends of the spectrum of educational thought. The

more liberal view had research to show that girls, Maori and Pacific Island students and students with differing abilities were being disadvantaged (for example, Benton, 1986, Alton-Lee *et al*, 1987). Those supporting new right views considered that the changing composition of the work force, rapid technological developments, the growth of the service sector and the competitiveness of international markets (Ministry of Education, 1993) needed a more skills-based approach. The Department responded issuing the draft *National Curriculum Statement* in 1988.

Although it would outwardly appear that the forces of the right wishing to instigate complete curriculum review might be holding the power at this time, the 1988 *National Curriculum Statement* was, in fact, a document of the humanist liberal ideology. It focused on the notion of equality of opportunity (Peters *et al*, op cit) and had a strong emphasis on school- and community-based planning (Codd, 1991). It reorganised the curriculum into the following areas:

Culture and Heritage;
Language;
Creative and Aesthetic Development;
Mathematics;
Practical Abilities;
Living in Society;
Science, Technology, and the Environment; and
Health and Well-being.

In content and language this favoured the liberal left view.

In 1991 the Education Amendment Act cleared the way for curriculum reforms to follow the administrative reforms of *Tomorrow's Schools*. Lockwood Smith, Minister of Education, enthusiastically embraced the ideas from similar reforms in Britain wishing to base the curriculum around the four key areas of English, Mathematics, Science and Technology. Several forces can be seen at work. Firstly, there is the neo-conservative emphasis on the basics, and secondly, the high position accorded Science and Technology also supports the neo-liberal wish to increase our capability to compete on the international scene and gain more control over the market.

In 1991 *The National Curriculum of New Zealand* was released for discussion.

Language was becoming a vital tool in spreading the ideology and the new document was sprinkled with "modern competitive society", "international standing", "world of work" and "future economic well-being" phraseology. The document also contained essential skills, achievement objectives and levels and a programme of national monitoring. The parallels with the British system are easily seen and, in fact, freely acknowledged.

Although it was reiterated several times that English, Mathematics, Science and Technology were the core areas the document's actual list of essential learning areas was:

Language;
Mathematics;
Science and the Environment;
Technology;
Social Sciences;
The Arts; and
Physical and Personal Development.

Under the various headings a little more recognition was given to the place of Maori and Pacific Island languages and cultures but nowhere near the central place held in the 1988 document.

The New Zealand Curriculum Framework Te Anga Marautanga o Aotearoa (1993) the policy document that succeeded the discussion document showed more liberal concessions. The cover depicted a shell motif which echoed the Maori koru. Each heading was translated into Maori and a section was included on attitudes and values. The four core areas were not mentioned, as all seven essential learning areas (ELAs) were considered "essential for a broad and balanced curriculum".

The development of Te Whariki

> Curriculum development is seen as a weaving; the guidelines provide a framework; each programme weaves its own pattern, each child his or her own curriculum. (Carr and May, 1994:25)

The history of early childhood education in New Zealand ran a separate course to that of education for children of compulsory schooling age until it became caught up in the reforms of the 1980s (May, 1991). It was much more tied to society's views on the role of women in the home and workforce. Two main strands appear in the development of early childhood services. One focused on the care of young children and came from the traditions of foundling homes in Britain. The other focused on education and was influenced by the philosophies of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel and later Montessori (May, 1997). The first kindergarten was established in 1889 to be followed by other services such as crèches (1903), playcentres (1941) and Kohanga Reo (Maori language immersion centres, 1982), so that by the time of the consultation period which laid the groundwork for *Te Whariki* there were 20 different types of institutions (Carr and May, 1993).

The Bailey Report of 1949 was seen as a key turning point in the recognition of the professionalism of early childhood workers as Kindergarten Teachers Colleges were established. Later reports set up centre regulations and childcare subsidies. May (1991) stresses, however, that any initiatives in improving childcare access and facilities only came after intensive lobbying by women.

As the Labour Government (1984-1991) began its reform of social and educational services the time was ripe for early childhood workers and supporters to lay the groundwork for a coherent and distinctive statement of the aims and practices of the early childhood community. "The bonus for early childhood was, however, to be swept on board a new upheaval of restructuring that it did not have to drive, just steer in the right direction" (May, 1991:7). In 1988 a series of national in-service courses took place which outlined 15 basic principles for an early childhood curriculum. Carr and May (1994:26) state "it was perhaps the first time that the word 'curriculum' was applied nationally to all early childhood, to all services and to all ages from birth to school age". This document defined curriculum as "the sum total of all children's direct and indirect learning experiences in early childhood services" (cited in Carr and May, ibid).

This was followed by the Meade Report *Education to be More* (1988) which with some amendments became the government policy document *Before Five* (1989). May was to comment, "despite the dictates of wider political and administrative

agendas, the early childhood concepts of diversity and the integration of care and education are not only intact but have been incorporated into a system which is more equitable to all" (1991:10). For a time the focus was on administrative matters but in 1991 a curriculum development contract was awarded to a team based at the University of Waikato. The project leaders set up an extensive network of consultation. They outlined the principles for development as those that would provide experiences that were humanly appropriate, nationally appropriate, culturally appropriate, developmentally appropriate, individually appropriate and educationally appropriate (Carr and May, 1994). *Te Whariki: Draft Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Programmes in Early Childhood Services* was released in 1993. This was followed by professional development contracts, research trials and further consultation. The final version was released in 1996 and the administrative guidelines for early childhood centres were amended to take account of the new curriculum.

Curriculum theory: the ideology orientations model

> Simply put ideology refers to the production of meaning. It can be described as a way of viewing the world, a complex of ideas, various types of social practices, rituals and representations that we tend to accept as natural and commonsense. (McLaren, 1989, cited in Pinar *et al* 1996:245.)

Pinar *et al* (op cit) clearly delineate the development of curriculum theory in eras- the traditional era, the reconceptualist era and even suggest we could be moving towards a post-reconceptualist era. The traditional approach arose out of the social efficiency models of the early twentieth century and culminated in the Tyler Rationale and subsequent curriculum development models. It draws from the history and research of the various fields of education, psychology, sociology and philosophy and has built up a recognisable body of literature, theories, models and specialists. The reconceptualist era began in the 1970s as curriculum writers began to challenge the ascendancy of the Tyler Rationale and seek to understand 'why' rather than 'how'. (Pinar *et al*, ibid). Jackson (1992:35) outlines the three features of the reconceptualist challenge as being the dissatisfaction with the Tylerian perspective, the exploration of other fields and academic traditions, and the rise of interest in issues of inequality.

The prior discussion of curriculum contexts was framed using concepts from critical analyses of social, political, and economic discourses and would fit within the reconceptualist paradigm. These themes can be further explored by adapting material from more traditional sources.

Regardless of the paradigm, curriculum writers often ask the question 'whose knowledge is of most worth?' Curriculum theorists such as Lawton (1978), Print (1993), Brady (1995) and Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) discuss the importance of understanding the disciplines of philosophy, sociology and psychology because the answers that are sought through them underpin curriculum policy and development. They suggest the ontological, epistemological and axiological questions raised by the early philosophers still resonate with today's curriculum planners. What is the nature of reality? What is knowledge? What do we value? These sit alongside questions from the sociological and cultural domains. What is the relationship between society and curriculum? What aspects of culture should be transmitted to the next generation? The questions raised by psychology enable us to select and organise relevant knowledge. How should we divide up areas of knowledge? At what developmental levels should certain aspects be covered? What teaching and learning strategies should be selected?

Lawton (ibid) proposed a model where curriculum developers begin with opinions about the nature of knowledge, consider these in relation to the nature of society and then make relevant curriculum selections which they modify after consideration of psychological factors. Lawton's model is used in this study not to discuss the nature of curriculum development but in an adapted form to try to provide an explanation of how ideologies are formed. Ideologies according to Eisner (1992:302) "are belief systems that provide the value premises from which decisions about practical educational matters are made" and this is a useful definition for the purpose that follows.

Print (1993) expanded Lawton's ideas in the following way:

1. Curriculum developers have opinions about the nature of knowledge and what is worthwhile (philosophy).
2. These opinions are the set in the context of the developers' understanding of society and culture and future social needs (sociology and culture).

3. The contribution of psychology -the nature of students and how they learn- then acts to modify the previously assembled opinions and data (psychology).
4. Together these foundation sources provide a background of information upon which the curriculum developers rely to make future curriculum decisions.
5. When merged with the curriculum developers' past experiences in curriculum we can see how developers tend towards particular conceptions of the curriculum task.
6. When these foundation sources and curriculum conceptions are seen in relation to differing curricula contexts, we can see why the final curriculum products are, and need to be, somewhat different. (pp32-3).

Print also has a model of how this works in which the various aspects are shown in boxes linked by arrows as in a flow diagram. The final three steps are of particular importance because they highlight how the perspectives of curriculum developers (or those wishing to influence the direction of curriculum development) are formed by their attitudes to certain key questions, their past experiences and their view of the current context. This is what can be referred to as an ideological stance. The author has worked from such questions and concepts to produce an ideology orientations strategy to aid the exploration of ideologies inherent in curriculum text.

If we take key questions such as 'what knowledge is worthwhile?', 'what are the current and future needs of society and how should we meet these?' and 'how are these selected content areas, skills and attitudes best transmitted to the next generation?' then place them inside a set of overlapping circles as in a Venn diagram, the central core of overlap can be seen as the amalgamation of a view of the world, or ideological perspective. How does this work? We need to return to the description of the New Zealand curriculum context and look more closely at an analysis of the social, political and economic factors outlined. Pollitt, Millar and Mutch, (1999) building on Dale (op cit) have listed the characteristics of neo-liberal, neo-conservative and liberal progressive orientations to education in New Zealand as follows: (Note that in recent times in New Zealand a liberal progressive orientation has embraced a more socially critical discourse.)

Neo-liberal	Neo-conservative	Liberal progressive
• emphasis on the value of parental choice in schools and the self management of educational institutions • development of closer links between educational institutions and industry • the acceptance of healthy competition for both individuals and the education sector • no particular view of right or wrong as market forces will lead the way • emphasis on individuality and individual rights	• the acceptance of a core compulsory curriculum for schools • the responsibility of parents for their child's education • the teaching of values and life skills which preserve the dignity of individual, the integrity of the family and the morals of society • the promotion of a single New Zealand cultural identity • carefully monitored accountability • education to prepare people for work	• emphasis on the needs of the individual • concern for equity in the broadest sense • valuing diversity and plurality • education as a preparation for life rather than for work • state and parents have responsibility for child's education • close links between education and the community • emphasis on cooperative ventures and approaches to learning rather than competitive

A person from, for example, a neo-liberal orientation to education might answer the three questions above in this way: knowledge that is of most worth is that which makes the country competitive in economic terms on an international scale; the country needs a skilled workforce and to keep pace with technological developments; and the organisational structures that are most flexible in meeting society's changing needs are the ones that should be promoted. A neo-conservative orientation would argue for a back to basics, traditional subject - based curriculum that promoted wholesome family values and discipline, and was organised in a way in which assessment could highlight excellence. A liberal progressive/socially critical orientation might argue for broader more relevant content, a negotiated curriculum, recognition of individual interests and abilities within a collaborative framework, and consideration of culture and gender issues.

Whilst this might sound simplistic and superficial the debates of this period emanated from such ideologically polarised positions as exemplified by the following quotes:

> *Schools, parents, and other groups in a school's community can use the curriculum framework to work together to develop policies and programmes which focus on the learner, promote a sense of cultural identity, work towards a fair share for all, provide a broad and balanced education, and encourage openness and accountability. (Department of Education, 1988.)*

> *It [the draft national curriculum] sets national directions for schooling which, I believe, will assist young New Zealanders to achieve success and acquire the essential knowledge, understanding and skills which will enable them to compete in the modern international economy. (Lockwood Smith, Minster of Education, National Government, 1991.)*

> *They [the students] will examine the events, beliefs, and forces which have shaped our world. They will explore the influences of different groups and individuals on society including the contributions of both women and men. Students will develop their understandings of their own culture and heritage, and those of others. They will study New Zealand histories, including Maori perspectives and will gain an awareness of different interpretations of the past. (Ministry of Education's statement about social studies,1993.)*

> *The teachers wanted evidence of the decline in education. I cited the draft social studies curriculum. I explained how it was nothing but a list of politically correct topics without any knowledge base or understanding of how the real world works. Fine... if you want to produce professional uplifters and protesters. But no good if you want to produce productive, thrifty citizens... (Rodney Hide, businessman and later right-wing politician, 1996.)*

> *Do we have to put up with all this nonsense - the industrial thuggery at Waimea College, teachers marching down Queen Street and Lambton Quay like old fashioned trade unionists, state schools closed due to industrial action leaving parents and students stranded, the social engineering mush of the new curriculum...(Douglas Myers, head of the Business Roundtable, 1996.)*

> *There are two views of education in the 1990s. The first holds that in a period of economic change there is a need to bolster the traditions of Western society. Proponents of this view argue that this is best done by teaching systematic courses in established disciplines in order to re-establish the bases of the social order and its values. The second view shares the concern of the first, but argues that education should provide students with the knowledge and skills to understand the effects of rapid change. This*

> *means that students must develop skills of critical thinking and decision making. (Hugh Barr, Waikato University, 1996).*
>
> *[W]e need to return to the family as the central institution for learning values. Schools should not remain neutral but set clear reference points from which children take their values. (Jenny Shipley, National Prime Minister, 1998)*

This ideology orientations model allows us to examine curriculum documents and their construction by providing a framework to delineate ideological positions inherent in the processes and products. A reader can begin to isolate the tensions and contradictions within a document. Following is an example of a piece of text from *NZCF* analysed using this model and the orientations outlined previously. (**NL**= neo-liberal, **LP** = liberal progressive.)

> Such learning will enable them to develop their potential **(LP),** to continue learning throughout life **(LP+NL),** and to participate effectively **(LP)** and productively **(NL)** in New Zealand's democratic society **(LP)** and in a competitive world economy **(NL)**.

This model could transfer to other contexts and using relevant key questions produce a different set of orientations (more relevant to the new contexts) to aid in discourse analysis. From here we will look more closely at the two documents that relate to this study.

Construction, text and discourse

> Deconstruction refers to attempts to take apart texts and see how they are constructed in such a way as to present particular images... (Burr, 1995:164).

As discussed earlier a curriculum document is not ideologically, politically or theoretically neutral. It is constructed, consciously or unconsciously, by its writers from their respective standpoints. Recognising a curriculum as a text allows us to deconstruct it and analyse prevailing discourses. Burr (ibid) outlines two meanings of discourse. One comes from the French philosophical traditions of structuralism and poststructuralism and follows themes of identity, personal and social change, and power relations. The other meaning focuses on performative aspects of discourse from oral and written constructions of accounts. Both meanings are employed in this paper. The notion of discourse as a way to

deconstruct views of identity, change and power is reflected in the prior discussion of ideology. The analysis of written text is reflected in the discussion to come. Burr continues, "A discourse refers to a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way produce a particular version of events" (ibid:48). Burr also discusses the fact that there is no recipe for discourse analysis. It is an umbrella term for a variety of research strategies from varying theoretical backgrounds and with differing aims.

The initial method undertaken in this study was a qualitative and thematic analysis (Kellehear, 1998) and followed Le Compte, Preissle and Tesch's (1993) "generic modes of manipulating information or theorizing". The seven modes are perceiving, comparing, contrasting, aggregating, ordering, establishing linkages and relationships, and speculating.

Perceiving was interpreted as the initial look over the documents to gain first impressions. Items of interest were highlighted, leads were followed and themes were explored. This was followed by comparing (looking for similarities) and contrasting (looking for differences) between the two documents. Next the themes were aggregated and tentative categories and headings were established. Once the themes were grouped they were then organised in various ways. The format selected here is a contrasting summary under headings that relate to the themes of the paper and provide enough information for the reader to obtain an understanding of the content and language of each document. The linkages and relationships are explored in the second part of the theoretical analysis that follows the summary diagram and the speculating is in the paper's conclusion.

Summary of the two documents

NZCF	*Te Whariki*
Cover and Symbol	
• glossy teal cover with shell motif	• pale green matt cover with woven flax motif down left side
• ELAs represented by colours in centre of shell	• title *Te Whariki* top right
• title in upper right in English	• subtitles in English and Maori centre right
• Maori translation lower right	• symbol is a whariki or woven flax mat showing the integrated nature of the principles and strands, the integration of the varying ECE histories and institutions, and the way centres weave their own programmes and children their own learning experiences
• symbol is a shell motif echoing a traditional Maori koru design	
• Each ELA is shown separately with its own colour and the dark teal of the framework at the centre	
Size and Layout	
• 28 pp with relevant colours on ELA pages	• 100pp with continuing woven flax strip
• section headings in English with Maori translation	• four sections: introductory section in English and Maori; section in Maori for Maori language centres; detailed section on principles, strands, goals and outcomes; final smaller section relating *Te Whariki* to *NZCF*
• contains introductory pages, ELA pages, essential skills, attitudes and values, assessment and historical summary	
Definition of curriculum	
• "The term curriculum has several meanings, depending on the context in which it is used.	• "The term curriculum is used in this document to describe the sum total of the experiences, activities, and events, whether direct or indirect, which occur within an environment designed to foster children's learning and development."
• **The New Zealand Curriculum** comprises a set of national curriculum statements which define the learning principles and achievement aims and objectives which all schools are required to follow.	• " The curriculum is provided by people, places and things, in the child's environment: the adults, the other children, the physical environment and the resources."
• **The school curriculum** consists of ways in which a school puts into practice the policy set out in the national curriculum statements. It takes account of local needs, priorities, and resources, and is designed in consultation with the school's community."	

Purposes, aims and intentions "If we wish to progress as a nation, and to enjoy a healthy prosperity in today's and tomorrow's competitive world economy, our education system must adapt to meet these challenges... It [the curriculum] provides a balance between the interests of individual students and the requirements of society and the economy."	"...to grow up as confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society."
The principles NZCF establishes directions for learning and assessment; defines achievement objectives; provides flexibility; ensures coherent progress, encourages independent and lifelong learners; provides equal opportunities; recognises the Treaty of Waitangi; reflects the multicultural nature of NZ society; relates learning to the wider world	• empowerment- whakamana • holistic development-kotahitanga • family and community-whanau tangata • relationships-nga hononga
Content areas **(seven essential learning areas)** • Language and languages *Te Korereo me Nga Reo* • Mathematics *Pangaru* • Science *Putaiao* • Technology *Hangarau* • Social Sciences *Tikanga-a-iwi* • The Arts *Nga Toi* • Health and Physical Well-being *Hauora*	**(strands)** • well-being-mana atua • belonging-mana whenua • contribution- mana tangata • communication-mana reo • exploration- mana aoturoa
Skills (eight essential skills) • communication • numeracy • information • problem-solving • self management and competitive • social and cooperative • physical • work and study	Skills are integrated throughout the goals of each of the strands in the following manner: "In early childhood, holistic, active learning and the total process of learning are emphasised. Knowledge, skills, and attitudes are closely linked. These three aspects combine together to form a child's "working theory" and help the child develop dispositions that encourage learning."

What does an initial analysis reveal? Two features that have been selected for this paper are the nature of the underpinning discourses as indicated by the language and symbols employed, and the nature of the contents of each curriculum. The framework for the discourse analysis has been outlined earlier and the analysis of the contents is covered in the next section.

The symbols employed to encapsulate the principles behind the documents give a very strong message. *NZCF* delineates each curriculum area (ELA) as a separate entity each with its own identifiable colour, and, indeed, the subsequent documents adhered to this colour scheme. The layout supports this notion of subject traditions by allowing each ELA a page to explain its contribution to the curriculum as a whole. This neo-conservative structure is at odds with the Maori design in which it is placed which would tend to indicate a more bi-cultural flavour to the contents and holistic approach to learning. The bi-cultural significance of the symbol for *Te Whariki*, on the other hand, is supported by the bi-lingual nature of the document and the genuine attention to the nature of diversity within and between centres. The metaphor is also reinforced by the integrated nature of the principles and strands.

To look more closely at the analysis of language using the ideology orientations model we can see that *NZCF* highlights the tensions between the three orientations outlined. One of the problems of discourse analysis outlined by writers (for example, Burr, op cit and Kellehear, op cit) is that a small section of text can generate many pages of analysis. The point can be easily made from one sentence. (**NL**= neo-liberal, **NC**= neo-colonial, **LP**= liberal progressive.)

Sentence from *NZCF*	Comments:
It provides a balance between	• In whose view are the rights of the individual to be balanced against those of society and/or the economy and to what extent? **(LP +NL)**
the interests	• Notion of stakeholders **(NL)**
of the individual students	• Varying conceptions of individual **(LP+NL)**
and the requirements	• Who requires? **(NC)**
of society	• Varying views of role of society **(NC+LP)**
and the economy.	• Notion that education serves the economy **(LP)**

NZCF is pulled in different directions by the conflicting messages it contains. One wonders how schools and teachers manage to make consistent interpretations, if at all. *Te Whariki's* message is more consistent with the views it expresses at the liberal progressive/socially critical end of the continuum. An interesting difference between the two documents is that Te Whariki has many more references, directly and indirectly, to learning theory. One page is, in fact, devoted to an explanation of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory of human development. This observation is supported by the document writers who talk of the four 'guides' they used in their initial planning- Piaget, Eriksen, Vygotsky and Bruner. (Carr and May, 1993). This leads to an eclectic mix of developmental and social learning theories within the document

Curriculum Theory: Bernstein's notions of collection and integrated codes

> Curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge, pedagogy defines what counts as valid transmission of knowledge and evaluation defines what counts as a valid realisation of this knowledge on the part of the taught. (Bernstein, 1971:85).

The analytic framework for discussing the curriculum contents comes from the reconceptualist paradigm. British writer Basil Bernstein in his work on class, codes and control outlined the notions of collection and integrated codes. The two distinctions are determined by the extent to which boundaries between the contents are clear-cut or blurred. In the collection code the contents are clearly bounded and separated from each other. In the integrated code the contents have a more open relationship to each other. The contents are seen as part of a greater whole. Integration is also more likely to "move towards a common pedagogy, a common examining style, a common practice of teaching" (Bernstein, 1971:81). In contrast the ultimate form of the specialised collection code, "involves a hierarchy whereby the ultimate mystery of the subject is revealed very late in educational life. And education takes the form of a long initiation into this mystery" (ibid). Bernstein claims that closure exerts a very powerful form of control which includes the initiated and excludes all others.

Two other useful concepts Bernstein employs are classification and frame. Classification refers to the relationships between contents. "Classification thus

refers to the degree of boundary maintenance between contents" (ibid:88). Frame refers to the context in which knowledge is transmitted and received, that is, the pedagogical relationship between teacher and learner.

NZCF is of the collection type. It is not taken to its furthest extreme but Bernstein did envisage this concept along a continuum from a strong to a weak, or blurred, classification. In *NZCF* the content areas are clearly defined although some element of overlap is acknowledged. Each essential learning area (ELA) is described in terms of what makes it unique in its contribution to the knowledge, skills and attitudes deemed important to New Zealand society. Each ELA has its own sub categories, for example, social sciences includes social studies, history, geography, economics and senior secondary school options such as sociology and legal studies. The strength of the classification is shown by the way that the boundaries are kept distinct in individual curriculum documents, subject specialist positions in secondary schools and separate senior examination prescriptions. Although in primary schools there is a blurring of the contents in the way topics are approached, the nature of the achievement objectives means that the achieved knowledge and skills are assessed, recorded and reported under ELA headings. As students proceed through the schooling system the top-down control exerted by traditional academic university subjects manifests itself. As students begin to specialise at Year 10 they become initiated into the deeper mysteries of the subject divisions and their relative identities and status.

In contrast *Te Whariki* does not align itself to traditional subject boundaries. The whariki symbolises its integrated nature. The parts are seen as contributing to the whole. If any one of the parts were not included the whole learning experience would be seen as incomplete. The integrated nature of the curriculum has a marked effect on the pedagogy. Specialists do not control particular areas. All early childhood teachers need to be generalists. The curriculum cannot be transmitted; it can only be experienced. Teachers and learners co-construct these experiences. Assessment is also holistic viewing the child's learning as complex and contextual.

Discussion

How did these two curricula come to be so different? As explained thus far there were differing ideological factions at work vying for control over the construction of these two curriculum documents. *NZCF* clearly shows the influence of the three orientations outlined earlier. There was a strong neo-liberal drive compromised by a sometimes conflicting neo-conservative force, and tempered by a liberal progressive/socially critical stance. The collection code organisation of content won out and re-established a traditional subject approach with an increased focus on excellence and accountability. Te Whāriki by contrast has a strongly integrated code and although some neo-liberal discourse appears in the document in the form of learning outcomes the liberal progressive/socially critical orientation dominates.

In a climate of strong neo-liberal and neo-conservative intervention in education how did the early childhood curriculum maintain its liberal progressive/socially critical discourse? The answers can be found in the way early childhood care and education, and the role of women fitted with the ideologies and election platforms of the major political parties. May (1991) outlines the respective positions. The National Party has a more "conservative stance towards preserving the status quo and upholding the mythical ideal of a society of nuclear families" (p5) and Labour still wishes to uphold that ideal but moves more quickly towards accommodating changing realities and needs. May also discusses the history of the gains made in early childhood policy as relating to a pattern activity in each government's terms in office. The Labour Government's term is exemplified by their ideologically driven social and economic upheavals. This is then followed by a period of more cautious consolidation from the National Government.

It was in such a context that *Te Whariki* was developed. The Labour Government "came to power with a strong agenda of reform for early childhood, particularly in relation to supporting equity policies for women and education" (ibid: 7). During their first term (1984-1987) economic restructuring adversely affected early childhood centres but the government promised to deliver on their policies during the second term. Constant lobbying from early childhood and women's groups kept this promise to the fore. The Meade Report (1988) brought together many of the dreams and visions that had previously been abandoned. May (ibid) uses the

metaphor of a whirlwind to describe how the early childhood sector was swept along with Labour's bigger agenda of social and economic reforms. With careful adaptation of the early childhood vision to fit the rhetoric of the times they were kept in the whirlwind's path. The National Government took office in 1991 with a promise to continue the education reforms but to shift direction and focus more on curriculum and assessment. New agendas of 'Parents as First Teachers' and the 'Seamless Education System' meant that a comprehensive early childhood curriculum was now a necessity. The neo-liberal interests continued to be felt in the funding and accountability measures which were introduced, but on matters of curriculum the new right lobby was remarkably silent. As each of the documents to outline the seven essential learning areas of the compulsory schooling sector was developed debates raged in the media, through submissions and in education circles. The Business Roundtable employed analysts to critique each draft in a highly visible campaign. Their critiques emanated from neo-liberal, neo-conservative and various theoretical stances and were to have a marked effect on the progress of some documents. The social studies document, for example, was rewritten three times to meet the demands of the conflicting perspectives.

Meanwhile the project team developing *Te Whariki* set up a consultative, consensual model which placed particular importance on a partnership with the Maori community. Helen May, one of the writers, [1] explains that the early childhood community had learned to work together as a political unit. An example of this was the way that they combined forces and presented the Ministry with a single bid for the curriculum development contract. This bid provided a full coverage of all early childhood interest groups and on that basis was accepted. Although early on in the process there was some pressure form the Minister of Education to align their curriculum to the school curriculum. This was resisted and the development was able to proceed without outside interference. In retrospect May wonders if some critique from outside sources along the way might have sharpened their thinking but she is justifiably proud of a curriculum that is now receiving international acclaim.

The author can only speculate that the hands-off approach shown in *Te Whariki's* development by the Business Roundtable and other new right lobby groups comes from their lack of understanding of young children and a lack of

recognition that anything that happens before the age of five is 'education'. This reflects their views on women in the home and workplace throughout New Zealand's history. Childcare and women's issues were largely invisible. Early childhood centres were seen as the domain of women and the work done in them was focused on care and play rather than education. If we return to those three earlier questions- 'what knowledge is worthwhile?', 'what are society's needs?' and 'how should important aspects be transmitted'? - then the answers that the new right might have given in relation to early childhood would probably focus on the fact that only formal, subject-based learning in recognised learning institutions, with formal assessment and which leads to economic growth is considered worth acknowledging. This lack of understanding was to play into the hands of the early childhood community which was able to develop a document that went against the economically driven trends of the time. They have produced an alternative voice in education policy and curriculum.

This paper has outlined the development and content of two contrasting curriculum statements which arose in a similar socio-political context. The political ideologies behind government policies and the high profile lobby groups which drove the curriculum reforms were described and analysed against an ideology orientations model. The three orientations explored were neo-liberal, neo-conservative and liberal progressive/socially critical. The model also aided in the deconstruction of the discourses used by stakeholders to advance their interests. The documents themselves were analysed to explore the discourses inherent in the language and content. The reason for the differing approaches to curriculum between the two documents was placed within the framework of political ideologies as expressed by the two major political parties and various lobby groups.

Whilst such a study leaves as many questions unanswered as it attempts to answer, it is hoped that this discussion of curriculum development in New Zealand will add to the growing body of research and analysis of these events, and in some way go towards redressing the shortcomings highlighted by Ahier & Ross (1995:1):

> While many commentators have observed that any curriculum is necessarily a reflection of the social context within which it is constructed,

the detailed examination of the pressures and forces that have shaped the formation of curriculum areas and subjects has not been greatly pursued.

Endnotes

(1) The spelling of words in the Maori language can vary according to the method chosen to indicate long vowels, for example, Te Whariki can have a macron over the 'a' or be written 'aa'. For ease of understanding and consistency I have written all vowels singly.

(2) Conversation with Helen May, 5 April, 2000.

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